

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT McNAMARA

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a man who exemplifies the American dream. Dr. Robert McNamara, an assistant professor of sociology at Furman University, rose from a childhood of Dickensian poverty and violence to become a successful writer, prodigious researcher, and beloved teacher. In addition to devoting much time to instructing and advising his students, he has published nine books; his most recent, "Beating the Odds: Crime, Poverty, and Life in the Inner City," has just been released.

In "Beating the Odds," Dr. McNamara addresses some of our society's fundamental problems while relating them to the trials of his own impoverished childhood. Though it is unusual for an academic to intertwine memoir with analysis, Dr. McNamara's style makes his book all the more compelling.

Bob McNamara was born in New Haven, CT, in 1960, the youngest of four boys. He and his family—"dirty, unkempt, and unruly"—lived a tenuous existence in a squalid section of the city. His abusive and alcoholic father was a compulsive gambler. McNamara's parents divorced when he was 10 years old. Neither wanted to raise him; after a time, they began paying other people to care for him.

As an adolescent, Bob McNamara was sent to live with 19 different families. His abuse and exploitation at the hands of these so-called foster parents convinced him that "being a foster child is one of the most frightening things that could ever happen to a young person." It was not until one of his high school football coaches realized his potential and decided to become his foster parent that McNamara gained a stable and nurturing home.

With the help of supportive teachers and his new foster family, Bob McNamara turned his life around. He worked two jobs to pay for classes at the local community college. After succeeding there, he enrolled in the State university and commuted 60 miles each way to attend classes. He made outstanding grades and won a scholarship to Yale University, where he obtained his doctorate. While at Yale, he met another graduate student, Kristie Maher, whom he would later marry and who also teaches sociology at Furman University.

Dr. Robert McNamara is a living example of the promise of American life. He was born into an abysmally poor and dysfunctional family, with no role models or guidance. He spent much of his childhood stealing for food and running with gangs. But he found purpose in the pursuit of knowledge and nurturing from his teachers, and went on to excel at one of America's elite universities. Today, he is an admired teacher and respected scholar.

Mr. President, "Beating the Odds" is not just the title of Prof. Robert McNamara's latest and most inspiring

book; it is the story of his life. In fact, beating the odds is what the American dream is all about.●

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF WALSH COLLEGE

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, today I rise to pay tribute to Walsh College on the occasion of their 75th anniversary. Since 1922, Walsh College has been highly instrumental in turning business leaders of tomorrow into business leaders of today. Michiganites, and many others across America, have benefited immensely by the quality of education and rich tradition bestowed upon its students.

Over 11,000 Walsh College alumni have worked to improve Michigan's economy and bring about a better quality of life for those near to them. With over 3,000 students and 4 campuses—soon to be 5 campuses—Walsh College continues to enlarge its positive impact on Michigan's southeastern communities.

It is well known by businesses in Michigan that Walsh students excel in their work. For example, 10 have received the Paton Award for achieving the highest Michigan score on the CPA exam, and 13 have received the Sells Award for placing in the top 100 of those taking the test nationwide. Through its six undergraduate degree programs and five graduate programs, Walsh College brings to Michigan an unparalleled excellence in education.

Again, congratulations for 75 great years in business education and, on behalf of the U.S. Senate, I offer my highest appreciation and praise to all who have made the past 75 years a great success.●

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 1997

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate has passed one of the most important agriculture bills it will consider this session. The Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1997 not only represents a strong statement by the Senate on the importance of research to the future of American agriculture but also a substantive improvement in USDA's research efforts. I am pleased that both sides of the aisle have come together to invest in the future of agriculture and rural communities in this country. I am especially pleased with the cooperation I have enjoyed with the chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Senator LUGAR, and his staff throughout the development of this important legislation.

This bill ensures that our farmers and ranchers have the world's best science and technology to produce food and fiber, protect the environment upon which agriculture depends, and create rural economic opportunities. We are devoting over \$1 billion in new funds over the next 5 years to advance

the science and technology underlying our agricultural system. I am also pleased that we were able to find the resources to improve the nutrition of our Nation's poorest children.

We have also extended the fund for rural America through 2002 and reaffirmed and enlarged our commitment to the pressing development needs of our rural communities. The fund was a key component of the 1996 Farm bill, created to provide funds to help farmers and rural communities to transition into the new farm policy environment. I am pleased we have allocated an additional \$300 million to these purposes so the fund will continue to emphasize creative research and rural development efforts.

This bill contains substantial new initiatives for research and development of new uses for agricultural commodities. I believe that the most important way to increase farm income is to find new nonfood markets for agricultural commodities. New uses activities at the USDA will be conducted in a coordinated manner to garner the maximum benefit from the various research programs. We have authorized the USDA to use its resources to conduct research on lowering the cost of production of alternative agricultural products in cooperation with startup companies, including AARCC companies. Finally, AARCC is a priority for the new research initiative included in this bill.

This bill also contains significant reforms in the current research programs. We have increased the accountability of the research and extension formula funds. We require the Secretary to consult with producers, industry and consumers in setting research priorities. We require external scientific peer-review of ARS research.

Finally, we have taken the first steps in encouraging the inter-State cooperation on research and extension problems. States are required to dedicate a portion of research and extension funds to problems of national or multi-State significance. In the process I believe we are making our research system more responsive to critical issues and we hopefully will eliminate unnecessary duplication of efforts.

Mr. President, we have increased the funding, competitiveness, accountability and credibility of U.S. agricultural research. We have let the world know that we are serious about equipping American agriculture for future food production changes. We also take steps to assure the taxpayer that research dollars are expended in the most efficient manner. We have done all this in a strong bipartisan manner. I think we can all take pride in the fact that today we have made a significant investment in a better future for not only the U.S. farmer and rancher but also in a better future for an increasingly crowded and hungry world.●